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ABSTRACT

The effects of a systematic guidance program upon school attitudes of potential dropouts in grade six of one elementary school in the northeast section of Washington, D.C. were assessed. The major findings from the data analysis showed significant differences in the pre- and post-test scores of the 15 students in the experimental group and the 15 students in the control group's attitudes toward school in the four basic curriculum areas. The difference was in the direction of the experimental group having a larger means in the four basic curriculum areas tested by the investigator. Hence, the null hypothesis was rejected. Analysis of the variables leading to dropping out such as the number of reported absentees and disturbances showed no significant difference between the number of absentees reported for the control group and the experimental group during the post-test period; therefore, the null hypothesis was accepted in this area. However, there was a very significant difference between the number of disturbances committed by the control group and the experimental group. The highly structured activities of systematic guidance enabled students to move to the social and psychological stages of developments in which they could consider not only their feelings, but also the feelings of others in problem solving, and thereby counteracted many of their negative responses. (Author)

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THE EFFECTS OF A SYSTEMATIC GUIDANCE PROGRAM UPON SCHOOL ATTITUDES OF POTENTIAL DROPOUTS

BY

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

		Page
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS		ii
LIST OF TABLES		v
LIST OF FIGURES		vi
Chapter I.	INTRODUCTION	1
	Background of the Problem	2
	Problem Statement	4
	Purpose of the Study	4
	Nature of the Study	4
	Fundamental Assumption Underlying the Problem	5
	Rationale	5
	Subordinate Issues or Questions	6
	Conceptual Hypotheses	6
	Definition of Terms	7
	Limitations of the Study	9
	Organization of the Study	9
II.	REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE	11
	Summary	25
III.	METHODOLOGY	27
	Introduction	27
	Research Design	28
	Method of Data Collection	34
	Research Hypotheses	37
	Summary	37
IV.	DATA ANALYSIS	39
	Hypotheses Testing	39
	Summary	45

Table of Contents (Continued)

		Page
V.	SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.	47
	Summary	47
	Conclusions	50
	Difficulties Encountered With This Study.	51
	Value of the Systematic Guidance Program for Potential Dropouts.	52
	Recommendations	53
APPENDIX A:	STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE.	56
APPENDIX B:	TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE.	58
APPENDIX C:	PARENT OR GUARDIAN QUESTIONNAIRE	59
APPENDIX D:	GUIDELINES FOR TEACHER RECOMMENDATIONS OF POTENTIAL DROPOUTS	60
APPENDIX E:	GUIDELINES FOR SELECTING SUBJECTS FOR THE SYSTEMATIC GUIDANCE PROGRAM.	61
SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY		62

LIST OF TABLES

Table		Page
1	CHARGES MOST FREQUENTLY BROUGHT AGAINST CHILDREN UNDER AGE 15.	3
2	FIELD PROCEDURES CONDUCTED WITHIN CERTAIN TIME FRAMES	31
3	THE CELL-SQUARE CONTINGENCIES FOR THE COMPUTATION OF CHI-SQUARE RELATIVE TO REPORTED ABSENTEES OF CONTROL GROUP VS EXPERIMENTAL GROUP.	40
4	THE CELL-SQUARE CONTINGENCIES FOR THE COMPUTATION OF CHI-SQUARE RELATIVE TO REPORTED DISTURBANCES OF CONTROL GROUP VS EXPERIMENTAL GROUP	41
5	SURVEY OF SCHOOL ATTITUDES STATISTICAL DATA ANALYSIS . .	43

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure		Page
1	NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN FAMILIES BELOW THE POVERTY LEVEL: U S 1969.	14
2	FEDERAL EXPENDITURES FOR PROGRAMS ASSISTING CHILDREN AND YOUTH UNDER AGE 21 BY CATEGORY: U.S., FY 1960-71	15
3	HEBB THEORY OF ANXIETY RESPONSE	17
4	RESEARCH DESIGN CONDUCTED WITHIN CERTAIN TIME FRAMES. . .	30

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

There is little or no question made of the contention that individuals who lack the fundamental skills in reading, writing and arithmetic are at a distinct and continuing disadvantage in today's schools. The number of failures are increasing and students even in the primary grades are attempting to drop out of our public schools.

Research studies have shown that these students attempt to drop out of school because they fail to understand their teacher's expectations and receive little attention from them. As a result, communication barriers develop between teachers and students. Many students refuse to study. They tend to form gangs and engage in undesirable activities such as stealing, taking drugs, and fighting.

In the past, intrinsic motivation may not have been as central to school achievement as it is today. Students were forced to learn materials presented to them. Now efforts to force or insist that students study without understanding their motivation for learning usually fail and increase antagonism toward learning. Therefore, positive perception and interaction is necessary for our potential dropouts. As stated in the editorial by Hilton, dropping out is not exclusively a high school problem:

> Few high school students come all at once to a dramatic decision to leave school and strike out on their own. For most, the decision

is long in the making and is rooted in years of unrewarding and unhappy school experiences.[1]

Background of the Problem

The need to undertake this study generated out of the investigator's 21 years of teaching experiences in public schools. This includes 14 years in one elementary school in the upper northwest section of Washington, D.C., two years as a junior high school counselor, one year as an elementary school counselor and a summer in the Middle School at Trinity College, grades 3-12. From these vantage points, the investigator has observed and compared behavior of identified potential dropouts over a period of 24 years. The number of potential dropouts is increasing not only among secondary children but also primary, especially in public elementary schools. A large number of these children are creating problems in and out of school and are violating many health and safety rules and regulations. Many children 15 years and under are being brought into courts almost daily for committing crimes similar to adults. Some charges brought against these school children are as shown in Table 1.

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[1] E. Hilton, "When Does Dropping Out Begin?" Instructor, 82 (December 1972), p. 10.

TABLE 1

CHARGES MOST FREQUENTLY BROUGHT AGAINST CHILDREN UNDER AGE 15

Charge	Percentage
Theft	25%
Breaking and Entering	11%
Violations of Curfew and loitering ordinances and running away	16%
Vandalism	9%
Auto Theft	4%
Violation of drug laws	1%
Violation of liquor laws	2%
All others	32%

Source: Profiles of Children: White House Conference on Children, 1970.

In 1963, the rate of reported juvenile delinquency in urban areas was more than triple the rate in rural areas. Nearly four times as many boys were referred to juvenile courts as girls. Approximately 2.5% of all children in the age group 10-17 were referred to juvenile court before age 18.[2]

In an effort to reduce the number of public school children appearing in the juvenile courts, some schools are utilizing corrective programs such as remedial reading, remedial mathematics, school based and in-school suspension. Little attention, however, has been given to preventive measures to meet juveniles' needs. When the needs of potential dropouts are not met through the teacher's instruction, they may become bored and disruptive. Consequently, the teacher's energy is drained by the necessity of being always alert to anti-social behavior. As a result, the teacher may have the disruptive students placed in a remedial

[2] Ibid., Profile of Children, p. 78.

class without due process. However, placement of students in remedial classes may not always be the solution to the problem. Today's schools need preventive methods in order to meet effectively the needs of the potential dropouts. In the light of the preceding information, the focus of this study is on the following problem statement.

Problem Statement

Demands on teachers are such that they frequently are unable to recognize potential dropouts. As a result of students' needs being unmet, they tend to terminate their formal education.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between the attitudes toward learning and achievement of identified potential dropouts who are members or non-members of a systematic guidance program. The effects of a systematic guidance program upon the behaviors leading to dropping out were also investigated such as the absentees and disturbances among the two groups.

Nature of the Study

An experimental study was conducted to test the effectiveness of a proposed dropout prevention program for identified potential dropouts. This study consisted of a two-step procedure. First, teachers used guidelines prepared by the investigator composed of dependent variables for treating the number of cases of absentees, reports of disturbances, attitude toward teacher and attitude toward student to select the initial pool of potential dropouts. Second, the investigator set up a schedule for testing and interviewing to screen further candidates for the program.

In addition, the investigator examined all available records of these candidates. Students were randomly assigned to treatment and control groups.

Instruments representing the dependent variables are the Survey of School Attitudes by Thomas P. Hogan, and questionnaires.

The form used in this study was form A.[3] The questionnaires used were designed by the investigator to evaluate further the guidance activities. Data were summarized and compared between the treatment and the control groups.

Fundamental Assumption Underlying the Problem

The basic assumption underlying the problem is that there are measurable differences between school attitudes of potential dropouts that are members or non-members of a systematic guidance program. Through systematic guidance, potential dropouts will be given the opportunity to change or improve their attitudes toward school. Further, they will be able to improve in academic achievements and possibly their levels of aspiration.

Rationale

This study focused on a realistic and practical identification of potential dropouts in order to apply a systematic preventive counseling and guidance program. Hopefully, a minimum amount of corrective counseling will lead to more time for teaching and learning.

It was beneficial to both parents and teachers. Parents became involved in helping their children to develop positive attitudes toward

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[3]Thomas P. Hogan. Survey of School Attitudes, (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc. (1975), pp. 4-35.

school. Moreover, teachers utilized materials and guidelines to help them to identify potential dropouts, also, to indicate the students' probable course of developments and to become more informed of the school conditions that apparently contributed to academic success or failure.

Subordinate Issues or Questions

In order to provide an answer to the problem, the following questions were addressed.

1. What is the effect of a systematic guidance program upon absenteeism of potential dropouts reported by their classroom teachers?

2. What is the effect of a systematic guidance program upon the disturbances of potential dropouts as reported by the classroom teachers?

3. What is the effect of a systematic guidance program upon the potential dropouts' attitudes toward school as measured by the Hogan's Survey of School Attitudes?

Conceptual Hypotheses

This study was designed to test the following hypothesis:

1. There is a significant difference in the 15 students in guidance activities and the 15 students in the control group as to the incidents of absenteeism reported by their teachers during the pre- and post-test periods. (Table 3.)

2. There is a significant difference in the 15 students in guidance activities and the 15 students in the control group as to the number of disturbances as reported by their teachers during the pre- and post-test periods. (Table 4.)

3. There is a significant difference in the 15 students in guidance activities and the 15 students in the control group's attitudes

toward school as measured by the Survey of School Attitudes' pre- and post-scores. (Table 5.)

Definition of Terms

Selected terms used in this study are defined as follows:

Potential dropouts: Students in school with a high rate of absenteeism and/or a lack of academic success. However, an examination of their cumulative records shows that they have made achievements in the 35th percentile rank or higher in English and Mathematics. Also, they have study skills inventory scores of the 25th percentile or higher.

Absenteeism: The number of unattended class sessions by the students as reported by their teachers.

Affective developments: Attitudes, feelings, values, beliefs and perceptions as measured by the Survey of School Attitudes.

Alternate courses: Two or more courses other than the one identified for resolving a conflict.

Attitude toward school: The concept students have about the four basic curriculum areas as measured by Hogan's Survey of School Attitudes.

Attitude towards students: The concept the teachers have about their students and the teachers' perceptions of their students' expectations as measured by the Teacher Attitude Questionnaire.

Attitude toward teachers: The concept the students have about their teachers and the students' perceptions of their teachers' expectations as measured by the Student Questionnaire.

Behavior modification: A purpose for helping; it is changing behavior through the systematic application of the experimental findings of the investigator.

Choosing behavior: Ways of resolving interpersonal conflicts.

Dependent variables: The variables for treatment such as the reports of absentees, reports of disturbances, attitudes toward school, attitudes toward the teacher and attitudes toward the students.

Disruptive behavior: The behavior exhibited by the students that causes a break in teaching for the purpose of disciplining the students.

Frame of reference: A term used to describe the basic position from which observations are made in the development of scientific theory.

Independent variables: The guidance activities, instruments, and materials such as the Survey of School Attitudes, Attitude Questionnaires and guidance materials.

Probable consequences: Predictions of outcomes of choices of actions.

School attitudes: Student attitudes toward the four basic curriculum areas -- Reading/Language, Math, Science and Social Studies.

Self-concept: As used in the study, describes the image the student holds of himself.

Social adjustment: The personal life of the child. The adjustment the child makes to his environment and to others.

Social intergration: A process by which a group of people or their culture becomes unified.

Systematic guidance: The highly structured activities scheduled for treatment of the dependent variables.

TAD: Toward Affective Development.

T-Test: Statistical significance of different means.

Limitations of the Study

1. This study was limited to one elementary school in the northeast section of Washington, D.C. It included identified potential dropouts in grade six.

2. This study was also limited to the ability to secure adequate information through questionnaires and/or interviews with their parents' and teachers' cooperation.

3. Additionally, this study was limited to students whose reading levels allowed them to answer questions on Hogan's Survey of School Attitudes.

4. There are other factors which could influence dropping out other than those variables under investigation in this study.

Organization of the Study

This study is divided into five chapters. The first chapter presented a description of the dropout problem in Washington, D.C. public schools. The demands on teachers are such that they frequently are unable to recognize potential dropouts. As a result of students' needs being unmet, they tend to attempt to terminate their formal education. An experimental study was conducted to test the effectiveness of a proposed dropout prevention program for potential dropouts. The basic assumption underlying the program was that there are measurable differences between school attitudes of potential dropouts that are members or non-members of a systematic guidance program.

Chapter two reviewed the relevant literature while the third dealt with the methodology including the research design and procedures for the study. Chapter four dealt with data analysis and major research

findings. In chapter five the investigator summarized the study, presented the conclusions, pointed out the problems encountered with the research, and suggested recommendations regarding the introduction of Systematic Guidance Programs for potential dropouts in Washington, D.C. public schools.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Identification and Counseling Potential Dropouts

The U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare report revealed that children are rebelling against the school's program throughout the city. They are losing interest in school. The complex relationship between the school and the children vary greatly from one school system to another. The children and the problems they bring to school are different. The support for learning that they receive at home and in the neighborhood is different. Slum schools face the greatest obstacles with least resources and are less adequate for effective education. The school is a public instrument for training young people. It must meet their physical and psychological needs in relationship to the goals and values of the society in which they are a part.[4]

According to Hansford during the age period from 6 to 10, there are important changes in the child's behavioral organization. These changes have significant information or implications for guidance in the elementary school. For some children, the first four years of contact with the school and peer environments influences their behavioral tendencies in later years, and sometimes through young adulthood.[5] Recognition

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[4]Delinquency and Schools: Office of Education, U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, p. 278.

[5]John D. Krumboltz and R. E. Hansford, "Behavioral Counseling in the Elementary School," Elementary School Guidance & Counseling, I, No. 1, 1967, pp. 27-40.

that these problems originate before the secondary school age has brought demands for services designed to help elementary school teachers in recognizing early the physical and psychological needs of primary children. Adler supported the importance of educational experiences for life. He stated that it is impossible in youth or immaturity to become a learned or educated person. Schooling at its very best should be preparation for the continuation of learning after schooling has been completed, so that a person can, by his own efforts, become an educated human being in late maturity.[6]

Hilton reported that the schools' organization structure affected the students' behavior. His findings from studies suggested the fact that large numbers of students fail to complete their high school education reflects the school's failure to provide these students with a meaningful education. If potential dropouts are not receiving an effective education in the schools, it is not self-evident why they should be compelled to remain in school until after their sixteenth birthdays. Further, it will do little good to return dropouts to school unless the schools themselves are improved.[7]

Dropping out is not the cause, but the symptom, of educational failure. These signs of dropping out of school are visible in the elementary school. Early symptoms included high absenteeism and poor academic achievement.

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[6]Adler J. Mortimer, "Education in a Democracy," The Professional Journal of the American Federation of Teachers, V. 3, No. 1 (Spring, 1979), pp. 6-9.

[7]Ibid., Hilton, p. 10.

Combs conducted studies on organizational structure to ascertain the differential effects of these organizations upon the behavior of the participants.[8] He found that the democratic organizational structure seemed most productive in these experiments. Participants became more involved and creative, and were generally more interested and willing to take more active responsibility.

Students with high rates of absenteeism and low rates of academic achievement have been identified as potential dropouts. Research studies show that the dropout phenomenon is fundamentally rooted in the material and intangible conditions of poverty. Like poverty, it is a self-perpetuating cycle. Many Americans, even in the 1970s, continue to be ill-fed, ill-clothed, and ill-housed. Cost of clothing and appropriate supplies place a burden on their families. They are financially unable to provide the extra stimulants to curiosity and personal growth common in middle class homes. Also, when opportunities for extracurricular opportunities are costless, they are often unaware of their desirabilities or availabilities. Moreover, the psychological aspects of poverty create barriers that prevent children from this background from capitalizing upon opportunities that do become available. On the other hand, the physical circumstances of poverty make success in school exceptionally difficult for these children.

In "Chronic School Failure and High Absenteeism" Kaplan and Luck stated that every pupil must be allowed to experience success early in his academic career.[9] The pupil must be encouraged to learn the basic

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[8]Arthur W. Combs, Helping Relationships (Boston: Allyn & Bacon, Inc., 1971), p. 210.

[9]Jay L. Kaplan, and C. Edward Luck, "Absenteeism and Dropouts," Educational Forum, XLII, No. 1 (November 1977), p. 48.

skills which are prerequisite for success at all educational levels and that this task cannot be accomplished by reforms of the high schools alone.

Figures 1 and 2 reveal that in 1969 more public funds were allocated for health, education, and welfare but many needs remained unmet, especially those associated with poverty.

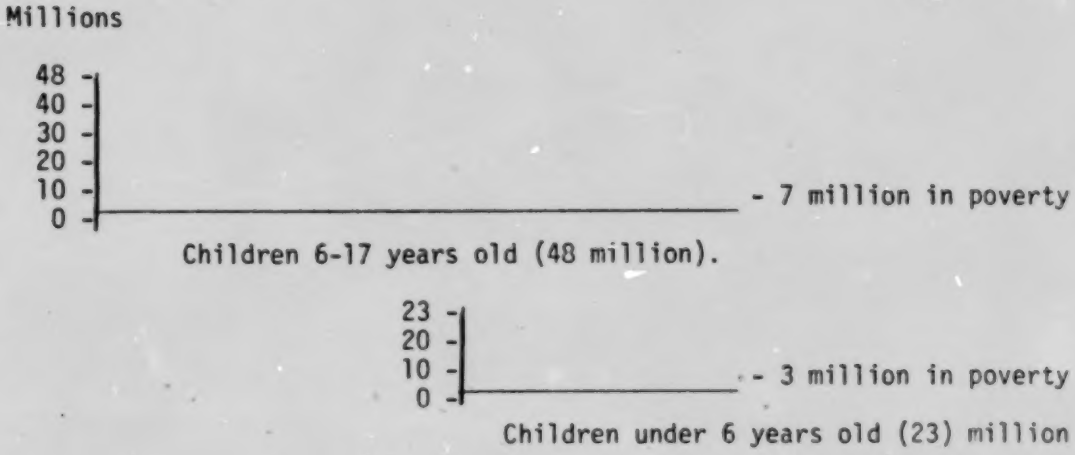
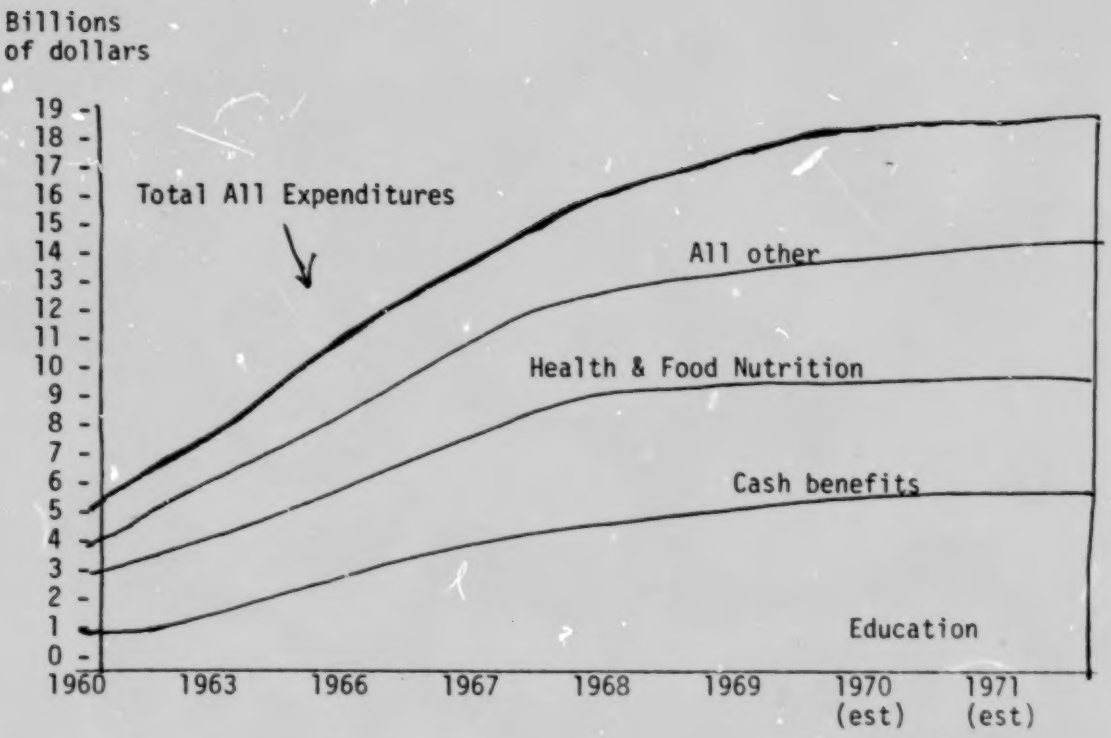


FIG. 1. Number of Children in Families Below the Poverty Level:US 1969



Source: Profile of Children, pp. 18-19.

FIG. 2. · Federal Expenditures for Programs Assisting Children and Youth Under Age 21 by Category: U.S., FY 1960-71

There is a substantial amount of research which indicates that the attitudes, expectations and perceptions of teachers influence the educational performance of their pupils. Studies by Leach stressed the interactive nature of learning and behavior problems in schools and the importance of viewing patterns of failure and deviance as the outcomes of interpersonal processes.[10] Dreikurs indicated that children who began their school life least prepared to meet the school's academic and social demands gradually get further behind those who began well prepared.[11] The

[10]David Leach, "Teacher's Perceptions and Problem Pupils," Educational Review 29, No. 3 (June 1977), pp. 178-193.

[11]Rudolph Dreikurs, M.D., Psychology in the Classroom (New York: Harper & Row, 1968), pp. 3-6.

variation in number and kinds of achievement difficulties identified between schools or classes in the same school, despite continuing patterns of failure overall, suggested that some schools and some teachers were more optimistic toward their pupils and expectations. Hence, they employed the causal approach in problem solving. This means that these teachers exhibited an understanding of the pupils' needs. They involve them in activities to promote pos tive group interactions. Their positive optimistic perceptions of pupils made school life more productive for both teachers and pupils. Children are in the classroom from five to seven hours a day. While in the classroom, positive or negative developments are taking place. The type of learning that takes place between them and the teacher depends upon the attitudes of both children and teacher.

Children who cooperate and conform best in class often receive many positive contacts from their teachers. They are rated high on scales such as lively, well-behaved, eager to learn, mature, stable, responsible, high I.Q., good social background, and from a stable family history. On the other hand, children who do not cooperate in class are often rejected by teachers and are rated low on achievement scales due to their disruptive behavior.[12]

Teachers respond to the demands of teaching disruptive pupils in a number of ways. They may respond emotionally by frustration, anger or anxiety. They sometimes play truant. Some of them become sick and psychosomatic symptoms have been reported. A minority leave teaching for less demanding work.

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[12] Ibid, Leach, pp. 192-193.

Wedell supports Hebb in his theory.[13] Hebb proved that a slight degree of anxiety can be stimulating and energizing. Increasing demands cause higher levels of anxiety which become unproductive in the sense that the teacher's ability to make decisions is impaired. Panic, exhaustion and a "nervous breakdown" may follow. Anxiety affects the teacher's thought process as well as his feelings. It produces changes such as accelerated heart rate with more rapid breathing and perspiration. The relationship between anxiety and the performance of the teacher's task is summarized in Figure 3.

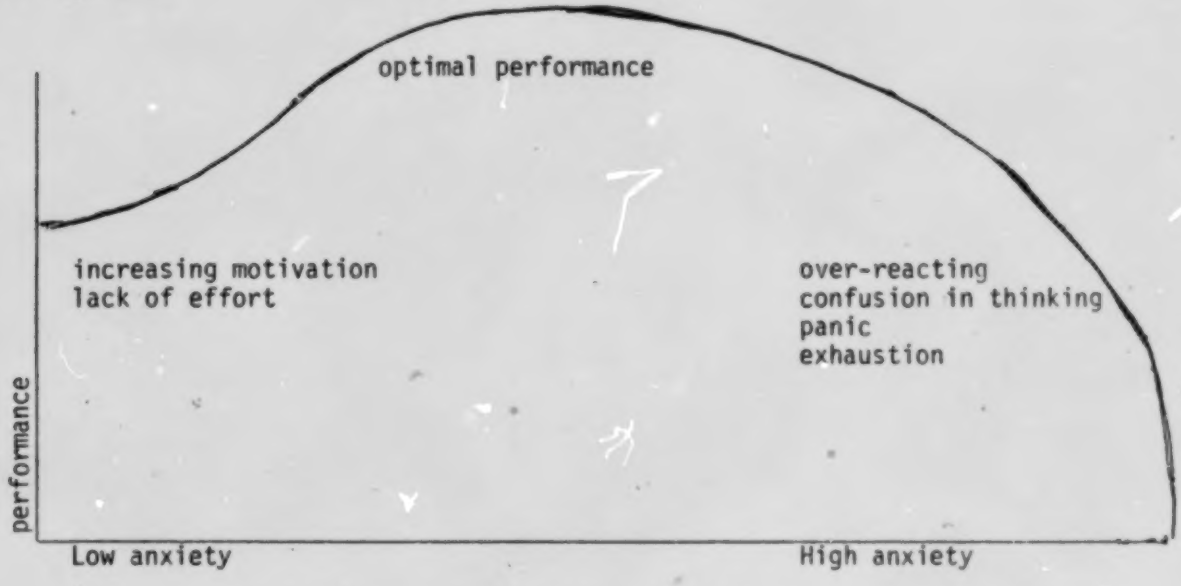

FIG. 3. Hebb Theory of Anxiety Response

It was concluded that teachers who must cope with difficult youngsters need continued help and support. They must be able to talk about their difficulties. Consequently, they should be trained so that they are able to ask for help without thinking that they are failures.

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[13] K. Wedell, "Behavior Problems in School," Educational Review, 29, No. 3, June 1977, p. 183.

Studies by Wren suggested the importance of the counselor's role in modifying others' perceptions of the dropout, based upon the assumption that the counselor has in actuality a more realistic understanding of and acceptant attitude toward the potential withdrawal student than do most of the other adults in the life of the student.[14] Such an understanding is not developed easily. The counselor must examine all available data on the potential dropout, his family and his community in order to modify his own attitudes. This may be accomplished through study, active follow up of the careers of dropouts of preceding years, and/or a direct relaxed contact with the psychological world of the dropout.

Additionally, the counselor explores and interprets to school personnel and parents data found regarding certain general characteristics of dropouts. Data explored and then interpreted are as follows:

(1) That the poor academic achievement found in secondary schools is part of a continuing pattern that may go back to the fourth and fifth grades.

(2) That if hostility toward school and adults is evidenced in high school, this is not necessarily directed specifically toward the high school teacher. Because underachievement is often the result of a basic psychological pattern.[15]

Kaufman concluded that potential dropouts represent a wide range of academic aptitudes.[16] It is true that overall estimates suggest that something in excess of one third of the dropouts have academic aptitudes below the so-called average range. It is also true that in urban areas

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[14] Gilbert C. Wren, Profile of the School Dropout (Washington, D.C.: American Personnel and Guidance Association, 1962), pp. 370-371.

[15] Ibid., Wren, p. 370.

[16] F. J. Kaufman, School Environment and its influence on Educational Programs for High School Dropouts, Interim Report (University Park, Pa.: Institute for Research on Human Resources, Pennsylvania State University, 1968).

more than the normal percentage of dropouts come from low status sections of the city. Also many come from better sections of the city and from middle class families. Data in this article were presented to indicate that the counselor has tasks to do in breaking down the tendencies of adults to type students. It concluded that the influence of such stereotyping was at its worse when applied to children who failed to conform to the school's expectations of them. Also, that potential dropouts require teachers who empathize with them and who are flexible, positive, and creative.

Blandford concluded that a child's perception of the school is affected by the perception the teachers have of him. The behavior exhibited by the child is the outcome of this interaction between him and his teacher.[17] In the classroom, the teacher is faced with the dilemma of 25-plus children whose needs, attainments and social adaptation are varied, and the teacher may be unaware of the best way to motivate them. However, most children expect to be bored for a large number of hours every week. Some will listen out of politeness or respect for the individual teacher. Children with low levels of psychological and social developments exhibit negative behaviors. They may disrupt teaching or even walk out of class. Teacher responses to these behaviors set the stage for further interactions. It was stated that giving a child a label may help him to feel more secure but it does not imply a measure of understanding, since the person is not the sum total of a definition or statistic and will never fit into a pre-arranged slot. Yet this is the way children perceive their education. The way many children perceive

[17] Gwen Blandford, "Child's Perceptions of the School," Educational Review, 29, No. 3, June 1977, pp. 178-179.

their education has been summarized as follows:

> They tell you what to do,
> What to wear,
> Where to sit and what to think,
> Then grumble if you've nothing to say.[18]

Goodman concluded that the child with the greatest needs do not expect or look for satisfaction or fulfillment in learning.[19] Problem behavior that is experienced in schools cannot be separated from the problems of the schools' communities. The child is seeking answers concerning his self-identity. His self-concept can be enhanced or marred by the teacher's attitude and sense of timing toward him.

Cathryn Mason did an assessment on the self-concept and achievement of disadvantaged students in Illinois.[20] Her major findings suggested that a special counseling service, designed to assist the students in bridging the gap from their disadvantaged backgrounds to the relatively foreign demands of the classroom, would be a significant variable in raising the self-concept and academic achievement of the students exposed to it.

Paler investigated the relationship between persistent students and dropouts with reference to factors regarded as influences contributing to premature withdrawal from school.[21] He concluded that the dropout problem followed the common pattern of causes found by other investigators.

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[18] Ibid., p. 178.

[19] Paul Goodman, "Youth in the Organized Society," Commentary, V. 29 (February 1960), pp. 95-107.

[20] Cathry Mason, "Effects of Counseling on Self-Concept and Academic Achievement of Disadvantaged Dropouts," Ph.D. dissertation, St. Louis University, 1972.

[21] Abraham D. Paler, "Persistent Students and Dropouts with References to Factors Associated with Early Withdrawal," Ed.D. Dissertation, University of New Mexico, 1965.

The school's dropout situation does not vary greatly from the characteristics which were found in other schools. The proneness to dropout is markedly revealed by a combination of several causal factors. The most compelling factors are unfavorable home conditions, lack of scholastic aptitudes, and failing grades. A high percentage of students with failing grades possibly dropped out of school due to academic difficulties. Fenelon proposed a study in Port Washington, Wisconsin to investigate and improve the dropout problem.[22] He found that the majority of the dropouts had average to above average measured mental ability. They came from families with five or less children, in which parents were living together and family income was adequate. Most parents had terminated their own education at the elementary level. Following are the seven reasons listed as to why they left school: (1) dislike of school; (2) lack of academic success; (3) work preference; (4) economic problems; (5) marriage; (6) family problems; and (7) physical health. Limited guidance experiences had been available at elementary and secondary levels, though students believed them valuable.

Myers concluded in his study that positive change in social status assists the student in more effective use of personal resources and reinforces identification with group goals.[23] He recommended provisions for increased opportunities for the establishing of mutual friendships during the seventh grade, particularly for those receiving no mutual

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[22]William J. Fenelon, "A Study of the Secondary School Dropout Problem at Port Washington, Wisconsin High School," Ed.D. Dissertation, Northwestern University, 1960.

[23]Eddie E. Myers, "The Effects of Transitions from the Sixth to the Seventh Grade upon Student Status, Attitudes, and Achievement," Ed.D. Dissertation, North Texas University, 1969.

choices and for students transferring from outside the school system.

Sommerville investigated the relationship between the school organization climate and self-concept, level of aspiration, attitude and opinion of students about school.[24] It was concluded that school related self-concept is related to the degree of openness of the climate when both the esprit of the teachers and the thrust of the principal are high. Students in low socioeconomic schools with relatively open climatics have significantly higher personal/social self-concepts, levels of aspiration, attitudes and opinions about school than those in relatively closed climates. High socioeconomic schools have a significantly greater proportion of relatively open climatics than low socioeconomic schools.

In The Cross and the Switchblade, Wikerson tells of his fight against teenage dropouts and crime in big city slums.[25] For five years, he continued a lonely and seemingly doomed crusade. He went into the streets and slums of New York to preach the gospel of redemption to the big city's gang kids. These teenagers had hardened to every kind of crime and viciousness. At first they sneered and threatened him. It was through his empathy and consistent guidance that he became the leader of Teen Challenge, a fast growing movement which is helping boys and girls who have failed to find themselves. Those who dropped out of school as an only means of solving their problems.

The President responded to the dropout problem by declaring the

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[24] Joseph C. Sommerville, "An Investigation of the Relationship Between the School Organizational Climate and Self-Concept, Level of Aspiration, Attitude and Opinion of Students about School," Ph.D. Dissertation, The University of Michigan, 1969.

[25] David Wikerson, The Cross and the Switchblade, (U.S. of America: Jove Publications, Inc., November 1964), pp. 7-173.

year 1979 as International Year of the Child. During the International Year of the Child, the world paused to take a look at the child and his welfare. Also, the conditions at home under which they must cope in order to reach adulthood. It was realized that in order to help our children we must examine the living conditions of children of other nations.

The catalyst for International Year of the Child Activities in America is the U.S. National Commission on the International Year of the Child, 1979, which was established by the President and Congress. The Commission is concerned about conditions like the unexpectedly high rate of infant mortality, school dropouts, teenage pregnancies, runaways, adolescent suicide, children charged with status offenses. The Commission is focusing attention on the danger of not fulfilling the basic needs of every child. The Commission believes that we must insure that all children grow up in environments that stimulate healthy physical, mental, emotional, and social growth. Additionally, children must have their needs met in ways appropriate to their age.

In conclusion, the Commission calls for a nationwide investigation of conditions that deprive children of a healthy way of living in their growing and developing stages. The Commission urges swift action to improve these conditions. Further, the Commission believes that to celebrate our children with commitment now, is an investment in our nation's future.

A special interreligious celebration in honor of the International Year of the Child, "Hear Our Children," was held at St. Peter's Church in the Citicorp Center in New York. One of the most moving aspects of the ceremonies was the procession down Lexington Avenue of clergy from all

parts of the city. Each leading a child by the hand to the Citicorp Center plaza. Young, chairperson of the U.S. National Commission on IYC, stated in her address to the audience that ours is the responsibility and the task to identify, understand and overcome this neglect of our children. Therefore, according to Young, we must commit ourselves individually and collectively today to work for a better life for all children so the rights which are their heritage are realized. Also, from various faiths, we gain strength and direction as we pledge our resources to serve children who are the hope and future of humanity.[26]

The Children's Rights in the U.N. Declaration of the Rights of the Child are being utilized in the programs planned and developed for children in IYC. These Children's Rights are as follows:

> The right to affection, love and understanding.
> The right to adequate nutrition and medical care.
> The right to free education.[27]

Charles Mathis responded to the dropout problem through his proposal for The Juvenile Delinquency Prevention Counseling Act grants. Appropriations for these grants are authorized at $50 million for fiscal year 1981. This bill would direct greater emphasis to the question of how to identify problem children before they get in trouble and land in court. Counseling through training and education could help the child with problems before he reaches the point of judicial notice when he is

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[26] U.S. Committee for UNICEF, Newsletter, International Year of the Child, No. 4, December 1978, p. 2.

[27] Jean C. Young, Preliminary Report to the President (U.S. National Commission International Year of the Child: Washington, D.C., November 1978), pp. 1-26.

clearly headed in that direction.[28]

Summary

A review of the literature on potential dropouts showed that they possessed a high rate of absenteeism and lacked academic success. However, the proneness to dropping out was markedly revealed by a combination of several causal factors. The most compelling factors were unfavorable home conditions, lack of scholastic aptitudes, and failing grades.

These signs of dropping out of schcol were visible in elementary school and became clearly evident by the third grade. The period when changes in the children's behavioral organization are exhibited through their first four years of contact with the school and peer environment. Their reaction to dependency conflicts during these years influenced their behavior in high school. Recognizing that school problems originated before the secondary school age brought demands for services designed to help elementary school teachers in recognizing early the physical and psychological needs of primary children.

A substantial amount of research identified that the attitudes, expectations and perceptions of teachers influenced the educational performance of their children. Also, the increased demands upon the teacher caused higher levels of anxiety, which exhausted her teaching performance in interacting with the children. A variety of approaches have been undertaken to assist teachers in solving the problems of potential dropouts. These can be divided into six major types. The most direct has been to enforce compulsory attendance by increasing the number of truant officers

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[28]Charles Mathis. Congressional Record, V. 124, No. 108 (July 1978).

and attendance teachers or through home contact programs. Making the curriculum more attractive and meaningful to the student has been another tactic. This has been accomplished through increased flexibility and the institution of remedial, vocational, and work-study programs. Attempts have been made to improve the rapport among students, teachers, parents and administrators. Guidance and counseling programs have helped students with psychological, vocational and academic problems. Coordinated efforts of school and public welfare programs have been instituted to encourage dropouts to return to school.

Analysis of data has shown that special guidance programs are beneficial to assisting teachers in identifying the potential dropout, to indicate his probable course of development, and to describe the school conditions that apparently contributed to academic success or failure.

Further, results of studies and experiences of the investigator, indicated that special guidance programs promoted positive growth and developments in psychological and social maturity of potential dropouts. On the other hand, it was found that potential dropouts were not provided adequate counseling and guidance services. Also limited amount of studies focused on treatment. It is for these reasons that the investigator focused the following study on a realistic and practical identification of potential dropouts in order to apply a systematic preventive counseling and guidance program.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

Throughout man's history the methods he has used to deal with people have been the inevitable outgrowth of his beliefs about the nature of human beings. As a result of various investigations, psychologists have learned to look at human behavior from two broad frames of reference. They are the external and internal approaches. The external approach makes observations of people from the point of view of an outsider, someone looking on at the process. The external approach to the study of behavior works well with problems of large groups and has been used by psychologists since the 1890's.

The internal approach is particularly useful in working with individuals because it seeks understanding of human behavior from the point of view of the child himself. It looks for the causes of behavior attitudes, beliefs, understandings, values, the perception the child has of himself and the world in which he moves. These are highly personal matters not readily available to examination by external techniques because they are primary data for the internal approach.[28]

Dreikurs concluded that human attitudes, feelings, values, beliefs and perceptions are the very aspects of experiences which make us human. They may be causes of our maladjustments and resulting failures as well

[28] Ibid., Combs, pp. 18-22.

as sources of our greatest joy and fulfillment.[29]

Zaccaria, in Approaches to Guidance in Contemporary Education, states that the child is the theoretical basis for the functioning of the modern elementary school. According to Zaccaria, the broad educational philosophy must stress the creation of an environment in which each child can develop to the fullest of his potential. Zaccaria explains these goals:

> To protect and foster the physical and mental health of each child.
> To help the children learn those basic skills (reading, writing, numbers, listening, observing) which are a prime necessity for his all-around development.
> To foster creativeness in each child.[30]

Recent research studies have shown that failure to achieve in school can cause emotional disturbance and contribute to maladjusted behavior. Further, more than half of all delinquents have average or more than average intelligence. Hence, the investigator designed an experimental study in light of the preceding approaches to guidance.

Research Design

The research design was an experimental study based on a pre-post design with a treatment and control group conducted in the fall term at one elementary school in the northeast section of Washington, D.C. Subjects for this study consisted of 30 predominantly black students. in grade six.

Examination of the neighborhood served by the school indicated that the subjects were relatively homogenous in respect to socioeconomic

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[29] Ibid., Dreikurs, p. 67.

[30] Joseph S. Zaccaria, Approaches to Guidances in Contemporary Education (Pennsylvania: Hadden Craftsman, Inc., 1969), pp. 149-150.

factors. The average family consisted of six with one parent present in the home. Most of the parents earned incomes of less than $5,000 a year and received public assistance.

A two-step procedure was employed for identifying the potential dropouts. First, teachers used guidelines prepared by the investigator to make recommendations (Appendix D). Second the investigator set up a schedule for tests and interviews to further screen candidates for the program. In addition, the investigator examined all available records of these candidates. Then guidelines (Appendix E) were set up by the investigator for the selection of students. Selected students were assigned at random to treatment and control groups by the investigator. Guidelines for selection of students were as follows: only accept students with achievements in English and Mathematics in the 35th percentile ranks of 25 percent or higher; and from home interviews where at least one parent agrees to cooperate and assist the investigator in working with the student. Lastly, willingness of the students to enter into a behavior contract to meet with the investigator in a minimum of six individual or small group counseling sessions. If the students met these criteria, they were accepted into the program. The program began in early October, 1978 and ended in December, 1978 -- a period of six weeks.

Of 30 identified potential dropouts:

A. 15 assigned at random to guidance; and
B. 15 assigned at random to control

October 2-16		December 1-15
Pre-test	15 guidance students	Post-test

Note: differences from baseline to post-test period of SSA.

October 2-16		December 1-15
Pre-test	15 control students	Post-test

Note: differences from baseline to post-test period of SSA.

C. Compared incidents in post-test between the two groups:

Dependent variables (treated)

1. Reports of absentees
2. Reports of disturbances
3. Attitudes toward school

Independent variable was the guidance activities. Effects of the guidance activity upon the dependent variables were evaluated through questionnaires and the Survey of School Attitudes.

FIG. 4. Research Design Conducted Within Certain Time Frames

TABLE 2

FIELD PROCEDURES CONDUCTED WITHIN CERTAIN TIME FRAMES

Sep. 1-Oct. 2	Oct. 2-Oct. 16	Oct. 16-Dec. 1	Dec. 1-Dec. 15
1. Identified pool of potential dropouts from teachers. 2. Screened pool for qualified subjects. 3. Identified 30 subjects assigned to treatment and control groups.	1. Collected absentee reports. 2. Collected reports of disturbances. 3. Administered Hogan's Survey of School Attitudes to students. 4. Administered questionnaire to students on perceptions of teacher's expectations. Administered questionnaire to teacher on perception of students. 5. Administered questionnaire to parents.	1. Conducted treatment on 15 subjects.	1. Administered Hogan's Survey to 30 students. 2. Administered questionnaire to 30 students. 3. Administered questionnaire to teachers. 4. Collected absentee reports (daily and/or weekly). 5. Collected reports of disturbances. 6. Administered questionnaire to parents

A. Between the beginning of school and October, 1978, teachers identified the initial pool of potential dropouts. During this same period, the investigator screened this pool of potential dropouts from candidates who passed criteria to select 30 subjects. On October 2, 1978, 30 subjects were selected at random from qualified subjects. Fifteen were placed in a control group for a period of six weeks.

B. October 2-16 was the baseline. Data on attendance and disturbances collected. Hogan's Survey of School Attitudes was administered to the 30 subjects. Questionnaires were administered to students and submitted to the teachers.

C. October 16 through December 1 - treatment was conducted on 15 subjects through a systematic guidance program.

D. December 1 - Investigator re-administered questionnaires and SSA to thirty students. Administered questionnaires to the teacher for her perception of students. Collected absentee reports daily and weekly. Collected reports of

disturbances daily and weekly. Compared incidents in the post-test between the two groups.

Following are the highly structured activities for the six sessions:

The major tasks of the first session were to increase student awareness of their self-images and to reinforce positive concepts. This was accomplished through the group process where students were guided in describing themselves. They also discussed the physical similarities and differences in the group. Following the discussion, the students used self-description words to write at least five sentences about themselves -- including at least two positive statements. They were instructed to omit names on their papers. Papers were collected and distributed randomly among the group. As a description was read, the audience guessed the person. If they were unable to guess correctly, the person identified himself. All participants received praise for their cooperation and contributions to the group process.

During the second session, students were guided in viewing and discussing situation posters to increase their awareness of their perceptions, feelings and expectations in relationships with others. Students were guided to express their feelings to specific situations. Feeling words were available for them to identify and discuss feelings they experienced during the school day. Lists were made of the positive and negative feelings encountered in the classroom. This was followed by a discussion of ways to strengthen their positive feelings encountered and to decrease negative ones. Information was recorded and students were instructed to keep a copy in their notebooks as reminders. Another

reason for keeping the recorded information in notebooks was to set the stage for the next session.

The third session was devoted to developing skills in making decisions as related to choosing behaviors. After viewing and discussing posters illustrating dependency conflicts, students were guided to name some alternate courses of action in dependency conflicts. Special reference was made to the conflicts encountered in the classroom. As students were able to identify and discuss problems concerning them in class, they became more aware of the advantages of choosing behaviors in dependency conflicts.

In the fourth session, students were given specific situations to consider probable consequences of alternate courses of action. Students identified the positive and negative courses of action and organized for role playing to exhibit consequences of alternate choices.

During the fifth session, the major task was to develop critical thinking in choosing courses of action in work study habits. In addition, they gave reasons for choices. Students were guided through responding to illustrations and specific questions to promote active participation.

Lastly, students were guided in identifying conflicts, suggesting alternate courses of action, predicting consequences and making reasonable choices. This was accomplished through the use of appropriate materials and reinforced through role playing by students.

Throughout the program, the investigator conferred weekly with parents of the experimental group. They were very cooperative in using the guidelines provided by the investigator to perform their roles and responsibilities toward dropout prevention.

Method of Data Collection

In addition to reviewing the literature, the following instruments were used to collect data:

Instrument 1: The Survey of School Attitudes (SSA) was administered to measure the students' reactions to four major areas of the school curriculum:

(1) Reading and other Language Arts

(2) Mathematics

(3) Science

(4) Social Studies

Students indicated whether they liked, disliked, or were neutral toward different activities in these areas. The sum of students' responses to a sample of activities typically encountered in a curricular area was considered an indication of their overall affective reaction to that area. The form used in this research was form A. It was administered in one sitting of about 30 minutes.

The SSA yielded scores on four scales, one for each of the four curricular areas. At both the Primary and Intermediate levels, each scale included 15 items. The items for these scales were distributed throughout the test booklet so that students reacted to each item independently rather than developing a response set to a group of similar items.

The reliability by scale generally ranges between .80 and .90, with a medial of .85. Primary level coefficients are somewhat lower than those for the intermediate level. Across the four scales, the coefficients are quite comparable, although figures for the Mathematics scale tend to be slightly higher. All standard errors of measurement

are between two and three raw score points. The data presented indicated that the Survey measured separate attitudinal dimensions. The evidence did not support the hypothesis that the items were measuring a response set or a single, global attitude towards school. There was reasonably good differentiation in what was being measured, and this differentiation was consistent with a content analysis of the Survey items, suggesting that Survey was measuring what it was designed to measure. It was not designed as a predictor. It was designed to give teachers and administrators information about the present status of students' attitudes toward school subjects.[31]

The Survey was helpful to the teacher planning instructional programs, because students' reactions to various activities in a curricular area helped determine how instruction in that area might be presented most effectively. Such planning was particularly relevant for individualized instruction. Information about a student's expressed interests in these four curricular areas proved as helpful to the teacher concerned with individual growth as information about a student's cognitive development.

Instrument 2: A questionnaire (Appendix A) was administered to students for their attitudes toward the teacher. The investigator designed the Student Attitude Questionnaire to supplement the Survey of School Attitudes. It consisted of 18 questions constructed for the dependent variables. The first 9 questions dealt with attitudes toward school. These included the teacher, work and the physical plant. Questions 10 through 18 dealt with personality.

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[31] Ibid , Hogan, p. 12.

The method used for rating was as follows:

Positive Responses	Questions	Negative Responses	Questions
yes	1-4	no	1-4
no	5-7	yes	5-7
yes	8-17	no	8-17
yes or sometimes	18	no	18

Responses of no to questions 3, 8 and 9 are negative attitudes toward school. Fourteen or 15 positive responses are considered positive attitudes toward school. However, responses of no to questions 3, 8 and 9 are considered negative attitudes toward school regardless of the positive responses to at least 14 or 15 items.

The seven completion items were used as a reinforcement of the Student Attitude Questionnaire and to further provide educators with data for planning instruction for these students.

The Student Attitude proved to be an excellent supplementary device for receiving direct firsthand information, especially in interviews. Therefore, this instrument was designed, when the investigator was unable to receive sufficient data through the Survey of School Attitudes alone.

Instrument 3: A questionnaire (Appendix B) was submitted to the teacher for her attitude toward the students.

Instrument 4: A questionnaire (Appendix C) was used in an interview with parents or guardians for their attitudes toward the students.

The parents and teacher's questionnaires were used in interviews to ascertain their attitudes toward the students. The questions for the questionnaires were carefully selected and constructed on the dependent

variables. They could be completed in one setting of about 15 minutes. Further study will be done on the questionnaires for additional validity or realibility measures as they are utilized by the investigator in the future. In this study, they were utilized as supplements to the Survey of School Attitudes to further ascertain data needed for this study.

Research Hypotheses

Conceptual hypotheses are stated in the null form for statistical purposes as follows:

I. There is no significant difference in the 15 students in guidance activities and the 15 students in the control group as to the incidents of absenteeism reported by their teacher during the pre- and post-test periods.

II. There is no significant difference in the 15 students in guidance activities and the 15 students in the control group as to the number of disturbances as reported by their teacher during the pre- and post-test periods.

III. There is no significant difference in the 15 students in guidance activities and the 15 students in the control group's attitude toward school as measured by the SSA pre- and post-test scores.

Summary

The Methodology included a detailed research design and procedures for the study, as well as the description of the data-collecting instruments.

The research design was an experimental study based on a pre-post test design with a treatment and control group. Between the beginning of school and October 1978, teachers identified the initial pool of

potential dropouts through guidelines provided by the investigator. During this same period, the investigator screened this pool of potential dropouts from candidates who passed all criteria to select 30 subjects. On October 2, 1978, 30 subjects were selected at random from qualified subjects. Fifteen were placed in a control group for a period of six weeks. Fifteen received routine guidance.

October 2-16 was the baseline. Data on attendance and disturbances were collected. Hogan's Survey of School Attitudes and questionnaires were administered to students. Questionnaires were submitted to the teacher. Also, parents were interviewed through a Parent Attitude Questionnaire designed by the investigator. Data were analyzed and compared. During the period October 16 through December 1, treatment was conducted on 15 subjects through a Systematic Guidance Program. On December 1, the investigator readministered questionnaires and the SSA to 30 students, administered questionnaires to the teacher for her perception of the students, and collected daily reports of absentees and disturbances. In addition, the investigator readministered the Parent Attitude Questionnaire to parents. Lastly, incidents were compared in the pre- and post-test between the two groups.

CHAPTER IV

DATA ANALYSIS

The data were collected for the purpose of investigating the effects of a systematic guidance program upon the school attitudes of potential dropouts in a northeast elementary school of Washington, D.C. The dependent variables were the reports of absentees, reports of disturbances and attitudes toward school. Independent variables were the guidance activities. Methods used to ascertain the degree of relationship and significant differences between variables were the chi-square and the t-test. The direct difference method for calculating mean differences was used as explained by Underwood, et al. The .05 level of significance was selected to test the hypotheses of this investigation.[32]

This chapter presents the analysis and findings of this study under these topic headings: Hypotheses Testing and Summary. Data concerning the Survey of School Attitudes toward Reading/Language, Math, Science, and Social Studies are shown in Table 4.

Hypotheses Testing

Null Hypothesis One: There is no significant difference in the 15 students in guidance activities and the 15 students in the control group as to the incidents of absenteeism reported by their teacher during the pre- and post-test periods.

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[32] Benton J. Underwood, et al; Elementary Statistics (New York: Century-Crofts, Inc., 1954), pp. 167-170.

Table 2 shows that of 206 absentees during the pre-test period, 106 were in the control group while 100 were in the experimental group. There were 108 absentees during the post-test period. Of these 108 absentees, 63 were in the control group while 45 were in the experimental group. Of a total of 314 absentees between the pre- and post-tests, 169 were in the control group while 145 were in the experimental group.

Chi-square analysis was computed for Table 2 and a chi-square of 1.40 with 1 degree of freedom was obtained. A chi-square of 3.84 with 1 degree of freedom is needed for significance at the .05 level of confidence. Therefore, the null hypothesis was accepted. This means that there is no significant difference between the number of absentees reported for the control group and the experimental group during the post-test period.

TABLE 3.

THE CELL-SQUARE CONTINGENCIES FOR THE COMPUTATION OF CHI-SQUARE RELATIVE TO REPORTED ABSENTEES OF CONTROL GROUP VS EXPERIMENTAL GROUP

Variables	No. of Absentees		
	Pre-Test	Post-Test	Total
Group I (Control)	106 (110.9)	63 (58.1)	169
Group II (Experimental)	100 (95.1)	45 (49.9)	145
Total	206	108	314

$X^2 = 1.40$
Level of Significance = Not Significant needed 3.84 w/1df for .05 level.

Null Hypothesis Two: There is no significant difference in the 15 students in guidance activities and the 15 students in the control group as to the number of disturbances as reported by their teacher during the pre- and post-test periods.

An examination of Table 3 indicates that of 223 disturbances on the pre-test, 113 were committed by the control group while 110 were committed by the experimental group. There were 142 disturbances on the post-test. Of these, 107 were committed by the control group while only 35 were committed by the experimental group. Of 365 disturbances reported on the pre- and post-tests, 220 were committed by the control group while slightly more than one-half of this amount (145) was committed by the experimental group.

TABLE 4.

THE CELL-SQUARE CONTINGENCIES FOR THE COMPUTATION OF CHI-SQUARE RELATIVE TO REPORTED DISTURBANCES OF CONTROL GROUP VS EXPERIMENTAL GROUP

Variables	No. of Absentees		
	Pre-Test	Post-Test	Total
Group I (Control)	113 (134.4)	107 (85.6)	220
Group II (Experimental)	110 (88.6)	35 (56.4)	145
Total	223	142	365

$X^2 = 22.99$
Level of Significance = .01 w/1df greater than 6.64.

Chi-square for Table 3 is 22.99 with one degree of freedom. This is significant beyond the .01 level of confidence. A chi-square of 6.64 is required for significance at the .01 level of confidence. Hence, the null hypothesis was rejected at the .01 level of confidence. This means that there is a significant difference between the number of disturbances committed by the control group and the experimental group. Further, this difference is in favor of the experimental group for having fewer disturbances than the control group.

Null Hypothesis Three: There is no significant difference in the 15 students in guidance activities and the 15 students in the control group's attitude toward school as measured by the SSA pre- and post-test scores.

Table 4 reveals that mean scores of 21.93 and 22.00 on the Reading/Language Tests were obtained by the control group respectively with a mean difference of only 0.07 between the pre- and post-tests. The standard error of the difference was 2.54 while the standard error of the mean difference was 0.68. A t-ratio of 0.08 was obtained. A t-ratio of at least 2.13 is needed for significance at the .05 level of confidence with 15 degrees of freedom. Therefore, there is no significant difference between the pre- and post-test Reading/Language scores of the control group.

Mean scores of 21.73 and 25.66 were obtained on the Reading/Language Tests by the experimental group with a mean difference of 3.93. The standard error of the difference was 2.64 while the standard error of the mean difference was 0.70. A t-ratio of 5.61 was obtained. A t-ratio of at least 2.13 is needed for significance at the .05 level of confidence with 15 degrees of freedom. Hence, there is a significant

TABLE 5.

SURVEY OF SCHOOL ATTITUDES STATISTICAL DATA ANALYSIS

Groups	Tests	Pre	Post	MD	OD	OMD	t	Sig Level
Control	RL	21.93	22.00	0.07	2.54	0.68	0.08	Not Sig
Experimental	RL	21.73	25.66	3.93	2.64	0.70	5.61	0.01
Control	M	23.13	23.53	0.40	1.30	0.34	1.17	Not Sig
Experimental	M	23.13	25.60	2.13	2.96	0.79	2.69	0.02
Control	Sc	21.26	21.86	0.33	1.16	0.31	1.06	Not Sig
Experimental	Sc	21.26	25.26	4.00	3.48	0.90	4.44	0.01
Control	Ss	21.40	21.66	0.13	0.99	0.26	0.76	Not Sig
Experimental	Ss	21.33	24.26	2.93	4.08	1.09	2.68	0.02

RL = Reading/Language Tests
M = Math Test
Sc = Science Test
Ss = Social Studies Test
MD = Mean difference
OD = Standard error of the difference
OMD = Standard error of the mean difference
t = Ratio of significance
Sig = Significance

difference between the pre- and post-tests Reading/Language scores of the experimental group. This difference is in the direction of the post-test scores having a larger means (being generally higher than the pre-test scores).

Mean scores of 23.13 and 23.53 on the Math Test were obtained by the control group with a mean difference of only 0.40 between the pre- and post-tests. The standard error of the difference was 1.30 while the standard error of the mean difference was 0.34. A T-ratio of 1.17 was obtained. A T-ratio of at least 2.13 is needed for significance at the .05 level of confidence with 15 degrees of freedom. Therefore, there is

no significant difference between the pre- and post-test Math scores of the control group.

Mean scores of 23.13 and 25.60 on the Math test were obtained by the experimental group with a mean difference of 2.13. The standard error of the difference was 2.96 while the standard error of the mean difference was 0.79. A T-ratio of 2.69 was obtained. A T-ratio of at least 2.13 is needed for significance at the .05 level of confidence with 15 degrees of freedom. Hence, there is a significant difference between the pre- and post-test Math scores of the experimental group. This difference is in the direction of the post-test scores having a larger means (being generally higher than the pre-test scores).

Mean scores of 21.26 and 21.86 on the Science Test were obtained by the control group respectively with a mean difference of only 0.33. The standard error of the difference was 1.16 while the standard error of the mean difference was 0.31. A T-ratio of 1.06 was obtained. A T-ratio of at least 2.13 is needed for significance at the .05 level of confidence with 15 degrees of freedom. Therefore, there is no significance difference between the pre- and post-test Science scores of the control group.

Mean scores of 21.26 and 25.26 on the Science Test were obtained by the experimental group with a mean difference of 4.00. The standard error of the difference was 3.40 while the standard error of the mean difference was 0.90. A T-ratio of 4.44 was obtained. A T-ratio of at least 2.13 is needed for significance at the .05 level of confidence with 15 degrees of freedom. Hence, there is a significant difference between the pre- and post-test Science scores of the experimental group at the .01 level of confidence.

Mean scores of 21.40 and 21.66 on the Social Studies Test were obtained by the control group with a mean difference of only 0.13. The standard error of the difference was 0.99 while the standard error of the mean difference was 0.26. A T-ratio of 0.76 was obtained. A T-ratio of at least 2.13 is needed for significance at the .05 level of confidence with 15 degrees of freedom. Therefore, there is no significant difference between the pre- and post-test Social Studies Scores of the control group.

Mean scores of 21.33 and 24.26 on the Social Studies Test were obtained by the experimental group with a mean difference of 2.93. The standard error of the difference was 4.08 while the standard error of the mean difference was 1.09. A T-ratio of 2.68 was obtained. A T-ratio of at least 2.13 is needed for significance at the .05 level of confidence with 15 degrees of freedom. Hence, there is a significant difference between the pre- and post-test Social Studies scores of the experimental group at the .02 level of confidence.

Summary

A detailed analysis was made of the data collected to test the effectiveness of a Systematic Guidance Program Upon Potential Dropouts' Attitudes Toward School in the Four Basic Curriculum Areas (see Table 4.). The major findings from the data analysis showed significant differences in the pre- and post-test scores of the 15 students in the experimental group and the 15 students in the control group. The difference was in the direction of the experimental group having a larger means in the four basic curriculum areas tested by the investigator. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected in this area.

Analysis of the variables leading to dropping out, such as the number of reported absentees and disturbances, showed no significant

difference between the number of absentees reported for the control group and the experimental group during the post-test period. However, there was a very significant difference between the number of disturbances committed by the control group and the experimental group. Further, this difference was in favor of the experimental group for having fewer disturbances than the control group. Therefore, the null hypothesis on absentees was accepted and rejected on the disturbances (see Tables 2 and 3).

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The purpose of this study was to test the effects of a Systematic Guidance Program Upon School Attitudes of Potential Dropouts. The effects of a Systematic Guidance Program upon the behaviors leading to dropping out were also investigated, such as the reported cases of absentees and disturbances among the two groups.

Instruments representing the dependent variables were the Survey of School Attitudes, form A, by Thomas Hogan, and questionnaires designed by the investigator to evaluate further the guidance activities. (See Chapter III for Methodology and Procedures.)

A review of the literature on potential dropouts showed that they possessed a high rate of absenteeism and lacked academic success. However, the proneness to dropping out was markedly revealed by a combination of several causal factors. The most compelling factors were unfavorable home conditions, lack of scholastic aptitudes, and failing grades.

These signs of dropping out of school were visible in elementary school and became clearly evident by the third grade. The period when changes in the children's behavioral organization are exhibited through their first four years of contact with the school and peer environment. Their reaction to dependency conflicts during these years influence

their behavior in high school. Recognizing that school problems originate before the secondary school age brought demands for services designed to help elementary school teachers in recognizing early the physical and psychological needs of primary children.

A substantial amount of research identified that the attitudes, expectations and perceptions of teachers influenced the educational performance of their children. Also, the increased demands upon the teachers caused higher levels of anxiety which exhaust their teaching performance in interacting with the children.

A variety of approaches have been undertaken to assist teachers in solving the problems of potential dropouts. They are as follows:

1. Enforcing compulsory attendance
2. Making the curriculum more attractive and meaningful
3. Improving rapport among students, teachers, parents and administrators
4. Utilizing more guidance and counseling programs
5. Coordinating school and public welfare programs.

Analysis of data have shown that special guidance programs are beneficial to assisting teachers in identifying the potential dropouts, to indicate the students' probable course of developments and to describe the school conditions that apparently contribute to academic success or failure.

The Methodology included a detailed research design and procedures for the study, as well as the description of the data-collecting instruments.

The research design was an experimental study based on a pre-post design with a treatment and control group. Between the beginning of

school and October, 1978, teachers identified the initial pool of potential dropouts through guidelines provided by the investigator. During this same period, the investigator screened the pool of potential dropouts from candidates who passed criteria to select 30 subjects. On October 2, 1978, 30 subjects were selected at random from qualified subjects. Fifteen were placed in a control group for a period of six weeks. Fifteen received routine guidance.

October 2-16 was the baseline. Data on attendance and disturbances were collected. Hogan's Survey of School Attitudes and questionnaires were administered to students. Also, questionnaires were submitted to the teacher and parents were interviewed through Parent Attitude Questionnaires designed by the investigator. The collected data were analyzed and compared. October 16 through December 1, treatment was conducted on 15 subjects through a Systematic Guidance Program. December 1, investigator re-administered questionnaires and SSA to 30 students; administered questionnaires to the teacher for her perception of the students, and collected daily reports of absentees and disturbances. In addition, the investigator re-administered the Parent Attitude Questionnaire to parents.

A detailed analysis was made of the data collected to test the effectiveness of a Systematic Guidance Program Upon Potential Dropouts' Attitudes toward school in Reading/Language, Math, Sciences and Social Studies (see Table 4). The major findings from the data analysis showed significant differences in the pre- and post-test scores of the 15 students in the experimental group and the 15 students in the control group. The difference was in the direction of the experimental group having larger means in attitudes toward the four basic curriculum areas

tested by the investigator. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected in this area. Analysis of the variables leading to dropping out, such as the number of reported absentees and disturbances, showed no significant difference between the number of absentees reported for the control group and the experimental group during the post-test period. However, there was a very significant difference between the number of disturbances committed by the control group and the experimental group. Further, this difference was in favor of the experimental group for having fewer disturbances than the control group. Therefore, the null hypothesis on absentees was accepted and rejected on the disturbances (see Tables 2 and 3).

Conclusions

It is the investigator's belief that Systematic Guidance was very beneficial in modifying identified potential dropouts' attitudes toward school. According to the data analysis, it provided a positive solution for interaction relationships between cognitive and affective development. Moreover, the highly structured activities of Systematic Guidance enabled students to move to the social and psychological stages of developments in which they could consider not only their feelings, but also feelings of others in problem solving.

This study focused on realistic and practical identification of potential dropouts in order to apply a systematic preventive counseling and guidance program. This means that a minimum amount of corrective counseling led to more time for teaching and learning. It was beneficial to both parents and teachers.

Parents became more involved in helping their children to

develop positive attitudes toward school. Moreover, teachers used materials and guidelines to help them to identify potential dropouts, to indicate the students' probable course of developments and to become more informed of the school conditions that apparently contributed to academic success or failure. Experiences and research studies showed that the attitudes, and expectations and perceptions of teachers influence the educational performance of their pupils. The variation in number and kinds of achievement difficulties identified between schools or classes in the same school, despite continuing patterns of failure overall, suggested that some schools and some teachers are apparently able to disconfirm the determinism of their home lives with individual school performance. Hence, they employ the Causal Approach in problem solving. This means that these teachers exhibit an understanding of the children's needs. They consider the underlining dynamics that lead to the children's behavior in school performances. Also, they focus upon the children's needs, interests and values. Moreover, they involve the children in activities that promote positive group interactions. Their positive optimistic perceptions of the children make school life more productive for both children and teachers.

Difficulties Encountered With This Study

There were many difficulties encountered. To the writer's knowledge no one had applied the general framework of this undertaking. Therefore, the methods of analysis had to be devised as the investigation continued.

A second difficulty was the lack of availability of pertinent data on treatment for potential dropouts. Often the available records

were incomplete and/or unidentical. Further, the research dealt with identifying the dropout or potential dropout and summarizing reasons for the dropout problem.

The third difficulty encountered in this study was the fear teachers exhibited from completing the questionnaires. They expressed a fear of administrators who did not like to give out information of any kind from the school. Hence, the information had to be collected personally through interviews using the questionnaires. However, the information was given freely in the interviews.

The greatest difficulty the investigator encountered was in changing counseling assignment in September from junior high to elementary school. By this change of assignment, the investigator had to revise the instruments for collecting data. However, the investigator's 21 years of experiences in elementary schools served as vantage points for her to still remain successful in completing the task chosen by her.

Value of the Systematic Guidance Program for Potential Dropouts

This study focused on a realistic and practical identification of potential dropouts and applied systematic preventive counseling and guidance. It provided for a minimum amount of corrective counseling which led to more time for teaching and learning.

It was beneficial to both parents and teachers. Parents became involved in helping their children to develop positive attitudes toward school. Moreover, teachers utilized materials and guidelines to help them to identify potential dropouts, also to indicate the student's probable course of development and to become more informed of the school conditions that apparently contributed to academic success or failure.

Hence, through systematic guidance, potential dropouts were given the opportunity to change or improve their attitude toward school. They were thereby able to improve in their academic achievements.

Recommendations

The investigator recommends that a program of systematic guidance for potential dropouts be implemented in the D.C. public schools and become a part of our Competency Based Curriculum beginning September 1979 school year. Grades K, three and six of one elementary school in each region should be included. Also, grade nine of one school in each region should be included. Additionally grade twelve of one school in each region should be included. Schools are to be selected by the regional superintendents according to the guidelines in Appendix D. The selected schools will be control or experimental groups for the project. The experimental groups will be selected according to the guidelines in Appendix E.

The investigator firmly believes that any system or program of guidance in its workings, denies, directly or indirectly, the opportunity to have an equal chance to learn and expand by being able to change or modify their behavior needed for achieving does by extension, serve to deny that child the rights set forth in our country's Declaration of Independence.

For our school system to continue contributing to this growing pool of children with high rates of absenteeism and low academic achievement is considered alarming by the investigator. The investigator is proposing to respond to the needs of our potential dropouts through the Systematic Guidance Program.

The value of the Systematic Guidance Program is as follows:

(1) The Systematic Guidance Program will assist teachers in recognizing early the physical and psychological needs of potential dropouts. Without assistance, teachers may respond to demands of teaching children identified as potential dropouts in a number of ways. They may respond emotionally by frustration, anger or anxiety. They sometimes play truant. Some of them become sick and psychosomatic symptoms have been reported. A minority leave teaching for less demanding work.

Increasing demands upon teachers cause higher levels of anxiety which become unproductive in the sense that their abilities to make decisions are impaired. Panic or exhaustion may follow. Anxiety affects the teachers' thought processes as well as their feelings. It produces changes such as accelerated heart rate with rapid breathing and perspiration. In light of the foregoing scientific facts, the investigator recommends a Systematic Guidance Program to assist teachers in recognizing early the physical and psychological needs of our children. Additionally, teachers will be able to modify their attitudes and sense of timing toward reacting to these needs.

(2) The Systematic Guidance Program will assist potential dropouts in modifying their attitudes toward school in Reading, Language, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies. In order to modify or change the potential dropouts' attitudes toward school, we must first modify or change their attitudes toward themselves. Hence, we must provide systematic guidance to develop positive self-images in the potential dropouts. Their positive self-concept enables them to feel more secure and thereby they are able to exhibit positive behaviors in school such as caring, sharing and cooperating in group activities. Further, they

are able to identify dependency conflicts, suggest alternate courses of action, predict consequences and make reasonable choices in solving problems. Moreover, through systematic guidance the potential dropouts will be able to exhibit a minimum amount of negative behaviors to be corrected by authorities.

APPENDIX A

STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Directions: Read the questions and check the appropriate response to each question.

		Yes	No	Sometimes
1.	Do you enjoy school?	____	____	_____
2.	Do you take pride in your school work?	____	____	_____
3.	Do you respect your school?	____	____	_____
4.	Are you doing your best work at school?	____	____	_____
5.	Can you do better work in school?	____	____	_____
6.	Is your work too hard?	____	____	_____
7.	Is your work too easy?	____	____	_____
8.	Do you like your teacher?	____	____	_____
9.	Do you respect your teacher?	____	____	_____
10.	Are you friendly?	____	____	_____
11.	Do you like your classmates?	____	____	_____
12.	Do you have a best friend in your class?	____	____	_____
13.	Do you trust your best friend?	____	____	_____
14.	Do you keep yourself neat and clean?	____	____	_____
15.	Are you truthful?	____	____	_____
16.	Are your parents or guardians understanding?	____	____	_____
17.	Do you tell your problems to your parents or guardians?	____	____	_____
18.	Are you willing to confer with me? (at least six sessions)	____	____	_____

Sentence Completion

Directions: Complete each of the following with the appropriate underlined word or words below each item.

1. I would try to come to school everyday if I _____

_____

understood my work, had a friend in my class, had enough clothes

2. I would not disturb the class if _____

_____

children didn't harrass me, my teacher believed me, my teacher helped

3. My _____ help me with my homework.

parents or guardians, brother or sister, friend

4. I receive my highest grades in _____

reading	social studies
arithmetic	writing
spelling	P.E.
science	

5. I receive my lowest grades in _____

reading	social studies
arithmetic	writing
spelling	P.E.
science	

6. My favorite hobby is _____

singing	drawing
dancing	or others

7. When I grow up I would like to be a _____

policeman, teacher, nurse, or others

APPENDIX B

Teacher Questionnaire

Directions: Please check yes, no or sometimes for each item as indicated.

Student_____

A. ATTENDANCE	Yes	No	Sometimes
1. Comes to school on time	____	____	_____
2. Comes to school regularly	____	____	_____
B. DISTURBANCES			
1. Becomes upset easily	____	____	_____
2. Have temper tantrums	____	____	_____
3. Has reasonable control	____	____	_____
4. Respects known rules	____	____	_____
5. Respects authority	____	____	_____
6. Fights frequently	____	____	_____
C. ATTITUDE			
1. Will not share	____	____	_____
2. Is disobedient	____	____	_____
3. Is dependable	____	____	_____
4. Is honest	____	____	_____
5. Attempts to protect his property	____	____	_____
6. Is happy	____	____	_____
7. Is cooperative	____	____	_____
8. Is lazy	____	____	_____
9. Does not try	____	____	_____

Thank you for your sincere cooperation.

Daisy P. Manning, Counselor

APPENDIX C

Parent or Guardian Questionnaire

Directions: Please read the items carefully. Check yes, no or sometimes for each item. After completing the questionnaire, please return it to me in the self-addressed envelope on or before_____, 1978.

Student_____
(First) (MI) (Last)

	Yes	No	Sometimes
1. Is your child making steady progress?	____	____	_____
2. Do you feel that he can do better?	____	____	_____
3. Do you feel that your child is comfortable in his class?	____	____	_____
4. Does he seek help with homework?	____	____	_____
5. Is his work too hard?	____	____	_____
6. Is his work too easy?	____	____	_____
7. Do you feel that The Systematic Guidance and Counseling Program will help your child to improve?	____	____	_____
8. Are you willing to confer with me at least once a week?	____	____	_____
9. Does he respect your authority?	____	____	_____
10. Is he disobedient?	____	____	_____
11. Does he become upset easily?	____	____	_____
12. Does he have temper tantrums?	____	____	_____
13. Does he feel secure in old and new situations?	____	____	_____
14. Will he share?	____	____	_____

Thank you for your sincere cooperation.

Daisy P. Manning, Counselor

APPENDIX D

Guidelines for Teacher Recommendations of Potential Dropouts

(1) Recommend students with high rates of absenteeism.

(2) Recommend students with low academic achievements.

(3) Recommend students who are disruptive to teaching and learning.

(4) Recommend students who are receiving public assistance.

(5) Students with a combination of two or more of the above traits.

APPENDIX E

Guidelines for Selecting Subjects for the Systematic Guidance Program

(1) Only accept students with achievements in English and Mathematics in the 35th percentile ranks of 25 percent or higher.

(2) Only accept students from home interviews where at least one parent agrees to cooperate and assist the investigator in working with the students.

(3) Only accept students who are willing to enter into a behavior contract to meet with the investigator in a minimum of six individual or small group counseling sessions.

If the student met these criteria, they were accepted into the program.

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